

Washington, DC – Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and Congressman Dave Reichert (R-WA) yesterday introduced the bipartisan U.S. Optimal Use of Trade to Develop Outerwear and Outdoor Recreation (OUTDOOR) Act (H.R. 2071) to reduce tariffs on recreational performance apparel. The legislation would make products like jackets and pants more affordable for American consumers, encourage participation in outdoor activities, and help designers and retailers of performance apparel better compete in the global economy.

“More than 75 percent of Americans participate in active outdoor recreation each year, experiencing America’s wild lands in ways large and small, expanding rural economies, and supporting the great companies that create innovative gear,” said Rep. **Blumenauer**. “I’m proud that this legislation will reduce the high tariffs on performance outerwear and expand consumer choice.”

“The enjoyment and exploration of the outdoors is not just a cornerstone of American recreation, but it is also the basis of a major job-creating industry,” said Rep. **Reichert**. “Many local businesses cater to this adventurous spirit, and I am happy to have found yet another instance in which smart trade policy can help these employers spur growth, remove a hidden tax on consumers, and foster greater interest in outdoor recreation. This bill is a needed update to the antiquated, unreasonably high tariffs set on recreational performance apparel that will both boost sales and enable families to more affordably outfit themselves for weekend camping trips and summer vacations. I will continue to work with my colleagues on the House Ways and Means Committee to advance this bipartisan bill and identify other ways to help Americans benefit from effective trade policies.”

“The sale of performance outerwear for hiking, biking, skiing, snowboarding, paddling and other outdoor activities is a major driver of business for outdoor companies. The U.S. OUTDOOR Act helps encourage the development of innovative and affordable performance outerwear, which in turn supports the enjoyment of the outdoors by consumers,” said **Matt Hyde, Executive Vice President of REI**. “We appreciate the leadership of Congressman Reichert and the other sponsors in supporting a vibrant and growing industry that benefits both the economy and the promotion of healthy, active outdoor activities.”

“Columbia Sportswear thanks Congressman Blumenauer for introducing the U.S. OUTDOOR Act,” said **Tim Boyle, President and Chief Executive Office of Oregon-based Columbia Sportswear Company**. “We support passage of this important legislation because it

will help spur product innovation, make performance outerwear more affordable, promote healthy outdoor-focused lifestyles and stimulate job growth.”

BACKGROUND

The outdoor industry contributes \$730 billion to the U.S. economy each year. Current duties on these goods are at rates far exceeding any state sales tax despite the fact that, in recent years, both the United States International Trade Commission and the Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements have concluded that imports of recreational performance apparel do not disrupt domestic markets or adversely affect domestic producers. H.R. 2071 creates new Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTS) breakouts for both knit and woven recreational performance outerwear and changes tariff rates for these clothing items to duty-free, thereby eliminating the “hidden tax” on these goods.